

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 603

By Casada

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Maplewood Farm as a Tennessee Century Farm.

WHEREAS, the history, traditions, and unique culture of our great State that we relish are truly sacred and worthy of our most noble efforts to document and preserve them as sacrosanct artifacts of our past and use them as path stones that let us daily trod in the perpetuity of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, in 1975, the State of Tennessee, through the Department of Agriculture, created the Tennessee Century Farms Program. The program's specific purpose is recognizing and documenting the contributions of families who have owned and farmed the same land for at least 100 years; and

WHEREAS, in 1985, the Center for Historic Preservation at Middle Tennessee State University assumed the responsibility of the program and now documents at least one Century Farm in all of Tennessee's ninety-five counties; and

WHEREAS, over the course of the program's thirty-year existence, 1,507 farms have been certified by the Tennessee Century Farms Program; of those, 157 are documented to be 200 years old, 634 are 150 years old, and 716 are over 100 years old; and

WHEREAS, one family farm designated as a Century Farm is Maplewood Farm located at 3085 Duplex Road in Spring Hill; and

WHEREAS, the establishment of Maplewood Farm pre-dates the Revolutionary War. It was formed by a land grant to Daniel Brown of South Carolina who, in turn, gave the land to the children of his sister, Elizabeth Brown Lee, of Connecticut; and

WHEREAS, the property's deed was registered in the County of Williamson in 1810; six years later, the only one of Elizabeth Lee's nine children to venture to Tennessee, Samuel

Brown Lee, settled thereon at the young age of 18. Over the next several decades, he and his wife and children worked this major plantation, producing large cotton crops and many herds of mules and horses, highly valued beasts of burden of that era; and

WHEREAS, following the Civil War, corn, wheat, and horses became the chief outputs of Maplewood Farm, and the next generation's proprietor, John Willis Napier Lee, was especially fond of breeding fine horses. One of his horses, Duplex, set the World's record for stallions in the high-wheel sulky in Detroit in 1887; later as he stood at stud at Maplewood, he brought Mr. Lee much renown and produced many generations of excellent racehorses; and

WHEREAS, fifth generation proprietors, John Napier and Mona Lee, have now acquired the bulk of the original granted land and today, they and their family operate a cow and calf business on the farm; and

WHEREAS, Maplewood Farm is one of the State's oldest and best preserved Century Farms, and is has the distinction of being listed on the National Register of Historic Places; and

WHEREAS, this legislative body is pleased to recognize the excellent work of the Tennessee Century Farms Program, and we congratulate the owners of Maplewood Farm upon its recognition as such; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we congratulate John Napier and Mona Lee upon the designation of their Maplewood Farm as a Tennessee Century Farm, and extend our best wishes to them for every future success.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.